

# **An Analysis of Brexit Coverage in the British News Media in the Fortnight Leading up to the Deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

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## Abstract

The referendum in June 2016 saw the United Kingdom vote in favour of leaving the European Union in what was dubbed ‘Brexit’. Since then, negotiations to agree on a withdrawal agreement have dominated British news coverage.

This dissertation analyses the coverage of Brexit during the two weeks leading up to the withdrawal deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. The aims are to establish which elements of the events occurring at this time lead to them being featured in the news media; the way in which it is presented to the reader; the language used; and whether these factors differ from one newspaper to another. A content analysis was conducted of coverage from three British newspapers – *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times* - in order to produce the results.

The analysis showed that the coverage at the time was predominantly negative, which is no surprise given the UK eventually requested an extension to the deadline having failed to pass the withdrawal agreement bill in parliament. Favour for Boris Johnson and fellow Brexiteers was visible in *The Telegraph*, while favour for the EU and the Remain campaign were seen more in *The Guardian*.

The frames of conflict and responsibility were most frequently seen, as is often the way with political news of this nature. The language used to describe politicians also differed from one newspaper to the next.

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## Chapter I - Introduction

Brexit is a major part of Britain's current political sphere, and as a result, its news coverage. October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019 was intended to be the final day of Britain being apart of the EU, but was put on hold due to parliament's failure to agree on a withdrawal agreement that would satisfy all parts of the union. One of the major issues was the location of the customs border which had to be in place between the UK and the rest of the EU. The options were either in the Irish Sea, or within the island of Ireland, separating Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland. The news coverage featured in this dissertation details exactly what the issues were and how they were unable to be resolved in time for the deadline. The general election is the other main topic featured in the coverage

The sample of articles is made up of forty-five articles: fifteen from each of three newspapers. *The Daily Telegraph* publishes its content Monday to Saturday, with Sunday's content appearing in *The Sunday Telegraph*. As news articles are taken from every day of the week for the duration of the time period in this study; for the purpose of clarity, all of the articles taken from these publications will be referred to as being published in '*The Telegraph*'.

Similarly, with articles published in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, all articles from these publications will be referred to as coming from '*The Times*'.

Likewise, because *The Guardian* and *The Observer* are sister newspapers, both appearing on *The Guardian* website, all articles will be referred to as featuring in '*The Guardian*'.

These particular publications were selected in order to represent a variety of political affiliations. *The Telegraph* is typically conservative, with *The Guardian* more liberal, and

*The Times* falling somewhere in the middle, being considered more centrist. Only broadsheet and compact newspapers were considered for analysis as it was found that less focus is given to comparisons between like kinds of newspapers. More often they are compared to tabloid newspapers than to each other.

After research into the theory of news reporting, and previous studies carried out on Brexit coverage, four main research questions were formulated as the focus of this study. These include questions of what news values are featured in the articles; what news frames are seen; what language is used to describe people; and if these factors differ from one newspaper to another.

A content analysis was carried out on a sample of forty-five articles published between 17<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 in order to establish answers to these research questions. Each article was read, and it was determined which news values appeared. These were then compared between all three newspapers to determine if there was a trend in the values noted. The dominant news frame of each article was also noted and compared. An in-depth analysis of the language used to describe the politicians involved was then carried out, along with an analysis of the headlines from each newspaper. These findings were again compared across the three different publications. A more detailed explanation of the research methods used in this study can be found in the third chapter – Methodology – and the results of these analyses can be found in the fourth chapter, entitled Results and Discussion.



## Chapter II - Literature Review

In reviewing the research carried out on the topic of news framing to date, three main areas have been identified and analysed in more detail in order to understand why news framing occurs and how it manifests in the news stories found in the selected UK newspapers, including: elements of news values and news framing; framing of Brexit in UK news media; and the effects of framing on readers. Previous research has also been carried out on bias in news media surrounding referenda and elections.

### Elements of News Values

The concept of news values and how much coverage a news story is given in the media was first analysed by Galtung and Ruge in their article, ‘The Structure of Foreign News’ (1965). They created a list of factors that can determine whether an event becomes news. They determine that events will become news if they satisfy the conditions of:

News Value	Definition
Frequency	The time span of an event.
Threshold	The size of an event.
Unambiguity	The clarity of an event.
Meaningfulness	The story has meaning to the reader. - Cultural Proximity; Relevance
Consonance	Predictability of an event.

<b>Unexpectedness</b>	Unpredictability or scarcity of an event.
<b>Continuity</b>	A running story. If it is reported once, it will continue to receive coverage.
<b>Composition</b>	Mixture of different kinds of news, such as domestic and foreign.
<b>Reference to elite nations</b>	An event involving the global superpowers, i.e. China, US, UK.
<b>Reference to elite people</b>	An event involving a powerful person. It is assumed that the actions of elite people are more consequential than those of ordinary people.
<b>Personification</b>	Event can be seen in personal terms.
<b>Negativity</b>	Event has bad consequences; the more negative the event is, the more probable that it will become news.

*Table 1. List of News Values and their definition.*

Galtung and Ruge (1965) discuss the relationship between events, perception, and the final image, and how events become news. They demonstrate how perception is made by one on the other's behalf, and then relayed to these others later. In this case, how the journalist (or media outlet) perceives ongoing events and presents their report in such a way that the reader can comprehend what happened and the subsequent consequences of said event.

Price and Tewksbury (1997) define news as “a report of the day's events, a collection of stories assumed to be of interest to audiences, and a vehicle for advertisers to sell products to consumers” (p. 177). They also note that news is an important means of “shaping collective actions to build support for their views or to mollify public opposition” (Price and

Tewksbury, 1997, p. 177). Meaning that news reporting can be used in order to both increase support for a certain view, or discourage and discredit opposing views.

News values are described as guiding which events and people are deemed “sufficiently newsworthy to receive attention in the media”, and that the application of the criteria leads to certain news being favoured and others excluded in the mainstream media (Price and Tewksbury, 1997, p. 177). It is argued that this subsequently leads to an audience receiving an “uneven set of information” which they are then accustomed to consuming in such a way as to reflect their social environment (p.177). Within the news stories that are selected to be written and distributed are elements that make up that story, and certain elements will be given priority over other elements so as to satisfy the news values present (Price and Tewksbury, 1997). Price and Tewksbury reference Gamson’s (1992) theory that a journalist’s own set of news values influence how they present public issues to their audience within certain frames, which often reflect “broader cultural themes and narratives”, and how this information influences the ideas the audience brings to their own thoughts and discussions about politics and public affairs (p.177).

Five values are observed which help to make events newsworthy and they are: (1) the presence of conflict, (2) the makings of drama or resonance with well-understood story themes, (3) the involvement of personalities, (4) proximity or “closeness to home”, and (5) timeliness or novelty (Price and Tewksbury, 1997, p.177). These values assist in determining which events are deemed newsworthy, how the story should be organised and presented, and which elements of the story are emphasised.

Conflict is a common news value seen in political reporting. Given the nature of politics with candidates running against each other, debating, canvassing for votes for either themselves or their policies, and dealing with other parties and other nations, it in

unsurprising that conflict often appears in news reports covering political issues. Price and Tewksbury cite Patterson's (1993) suggestion that journalists tend almost always to approach news stories from an angle of conflict as a means of catching and sustaining the audience's attention and interest.

As well as conflict, other dramatic elements are often found in news stories to arouse interest in the audience, which tap into "shared narratives...the rise and fall of the great, Man's inhumanity to Man..." (Price and Tewksbury, 1997, p.178). By using themes which are familiar to an audience, greater engagement can be achieved. This can be done by including anecdotes, people of note, tragic or humour events, or basic storytelling devices in order to create excitement out of what could otherwise be a somewhat dry news report with which fewer people would engage (Price and Tewksbury, 1997).

The third news value which is the inclusion of personalities reflects the well documented fact that news stories involving people of note gather more attention from both the media and their audiences. This is seen in political news reporting when you consider the fact that the news stories often feature the people involved as the main focus of the story, rather than the political, social, and economic institutions and forces that dictate much of our lives (Patterson, 1993). Perhaps as a way of encouraging the audience to engage with the topic at hand, the focus is on the people that we see regularly, and getting the audience to focus on and relate to the person, rather than the institutions we know little of, or the forces we cannot see.

Proximity is the next news value discussed. Though this is noted as being more prominent for local rather than national media outlets, it still plays a part at the latter level (Price and Tewksbury, 1997). Proximity is said to include how the story is structured as well as whether the story makes the news in the first place. Gamson (1992) suggests that the

strategy of making news relatable at a personal and local level typically takes the form of framing an issue in terms of its economic impact on its audience and their community.

The final news value is timeliness. Given the amount of news and information that is published every day, news media outlets tend to emphasize the very latest developments in order to be competitive in the industry (Price and Tewksbury, 1997). Timeliness would initially strike as being important when reporting on Brexit as it was such a long process, from its initial inception, to the June 2016 referendum, to the October 2019 deadline, which then became January 2020, which is still not due to take full effect until January 2021. Any new, however minor, turn of events is bound to be something that the media will take up and report quickly in order to keep up with developments and bring them to their audience. A long-term issue, such as Brexit, is therefore likely to be covered by continuously reporting stories on only the latest turn of events.

Some critics claim that these news values being applied to the reporting of events can result in issue being fragmented and presented “as a series of unfolding stories without any broader, coherent political or social context” (Price and Tewksbury, 1997, p. 179). However, Price and Tewksbury conclude that these characteristics of the news reporting seem “endemic to newsgathering” due to the time pressures faced by media outlets, the challenges of relaying complex information in highly condensed formats such as a television report or newspaper article, and the practical difficulties “of casting a news net over highly fluid, rapidly changing circumstances” (1997, p. 180).

### **Elements of News Framing**

The news values discussed by Price and Tewksbury often appear in articles in the form of news frames, where an event is reported in such a way as to emphasize a certain

consequence or other aspect of the story. There are multiple elements involved in news framing. It begins with the way the journalist presents the information in their article, and then moves on to how the reader interprets what the journalist has written (de Vreese, 2005, p. 51). Entman (1993) notes that frames have several locations, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture (p. 51). Khabaz (2018) claims that framing is “unavoidable” in mass communication, and goes on to pose two important questions: how does a frame come about and what consequences does the frame have? (p. 497). This research project considers these questions and applies them to the Brexit news coverage in the UK.

Weaver quotes Entman’s (1993, p. 52) argument that “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (Weaver, 2007, p. 143).

Weaver goes on to discuss the method of “priming” in news articles, a “second-level agenda setting”, which looks to agenda setting “for public opinion” (p. 145). This refers back to a study by Weaver, McCombs and Spellman (1975) where they speculated that the media may determine which issues readers would use in evaluating political figures, though Weaver notes, they did not use the word “priming” (p. 145). This is of interest to this research project as it suggests that the articles studied may influence the readers as to which issues surrounding Brexit may be of importance to them and their opinion, and also how they critique the performance of political figures involved in the negotiations between the UK and EU.

The process of agenda setting when it comes to news reports can no longer be said to be an exclusive activity of print and broadcast journalists (McCombs, Shaw, Weaver, 2009,

p. 85). Political advertising is more widely seen in the media and indeed on social media now, even more so than when McCombs et al. were conducting their research in 2009. McCombs et al. refer to corporate, governmental, and non-governmental organisations' paid advertising, even without the knowledge of what was to come with Facebook, Cambridge Analytica and the 2016 election and referendum on which they would have such an effect (p. 86). Aside from any questionable advertising involved in those instances, research from Atkin and Heald (1976) shows that voters' knowledge of candidates' issue positions was correlated with political advertising exposure. This leads to a question of how exposure of the Leave campaign was handled and how it influenced voters.

Druckman considers framing on an individual level, as evaluation through "frame in thought" (2007, p. 105). He gives the example of an individual's opinion on a hate group's right to rally, and how a person who believes free speech dominates other considerations has free speech as their 'frame in thought'. Whereas another individual may consider "free speech, public safety, and the effect of the rally on the community's reputation" to be equally important in accessing the hate group's right to rally, then that individual's frame in thought consists of a mix of considerations (Druckman, p. 106). This may come into play in this project through one news outlet considering the economic impact of Brexit to be the most important consideration, whereas another may consider the economic impact and the right to the common travel area to be of equal importance.

Druckman also contemplates how frames are produced. He refers back to Entman's (2004) argument that frames "originating from the administration shape the frames used by other elites (eg. members of Congress), media outlets, and the public" (p. 117). Druckman also notes that the public's reaction to initial frames in turn influences the media and elites, and can affect the administration's overall view (p. 117). He goes on to propose the benefits of framing effects, suggesting that they are "intrinsic" in the formation of public opinion,

when certain frames are accepted, while others are rejected (Druckman, p. 120). Given the importance of the formation of public opinion when considering one's vote for candidates, issues, or referenda, framing effects could be considered a necessary part of the coverage of events leading up to any type of vote.

Erving Goffman's (1974) *Frame Analysis* maintains that we all organize and interpret our experiences in order to comprehend and make sense of them. This "schemata of interpretations" known as 'frames' allow us to "locate, perceive, identify, and label" events and information (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). Gitlin (1980) similarly describes frames as "persistent selection, emphasis, and exclusion" or information which "enable journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely in order to package the information for efficient relay to their audiences" (p. 7) .

An event can only become 'news' when a journalist or some other player in the media and this is how it occurs. In order to make the event comprehensible, either by viewing or reading, it must be presented or 'framed' in a certain way so as to appeal to the audience. In tabloid media, the emotional elements of the story are often highlighted or exaggerated in order to appeal to the audience's emotion in turn. Another instance would be when information is placed in a unique context so that "certain elements of the issue get a greater allocation of an individual's cognitive resources" (Pan and Kosicki, 1993, p. 57).

Kinder and Sanders (1990) observe that frames function as both "internal structures of the mind" and "devices embedded in political discourse" (p. 74). Meaning that we frame the news ourselves through the way we process the information as a result of our own previous experiences, and also through the frame presented to us by the media which we are consuming. Pan and Kosicki argue that framing is a cyclical process because those involved – sources, journalists, audience members – "all engage in the process based on their socially



defined roles and are linked to one another by the news discourse that they design, construct, transmit, and act on” (p. 57).

They go on to explain how this occurs because the space in which news discourse takes place is populated by a society with commonly held basic beliefs, or ‘common sense’ claims such as how “Equal opportunities are desirable” or “Truth means something real” (Pan and Kosicki, p. 57). It is these beliefs which set the parameters within which news discourse is formed, relayed, and consumed (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). A central part of this cycle is ‘news text’ which is produced under the guidance of “working theories of the news media”, “rules, conventions, rituals, and structures of news discourse”, and “anticipated audience responses” (Pan and Kosicki, p. 57). This carefully constructed news text is then transmitted to the audience who are in receipt of the frame in which the text is presented, and in-turn, filter the text through their own frame based on their individual previous understanding and experiences. Due to this process which the audience undertakes as they consume the media, the intended frame of the text is not always received as the journalist may intended.

Pan and Kosicki discuss their theories of news discourse and framing devices with the understanding that “every news story has a theme that functions as the central organising idea” (p. 58). This is done so that it is easier to establish the set of information or the “meaning” of a news story, and how one goes about getting that meaning across to an audience. Due to the fact that one reader may interpret something they read differently to another reader, it is not always the case that the intended theme and the comprehended theme are identical (Pan and Kosicki, 1993). As the theme is the “cognitive window” through which the news story is “seen”, it is also referred to as the “frame” (p. 59). The signifying elements of a theme are described as “structurally located lexical choices of codes constructed by following certain shared rules and conventions” (p. 59). More simply, they are a choice of tools that journalists and other media makers use to compose news for the

audience to process. The specific focus of the news story after this process is completed, or the theme of the news story, is referred to as a 'frame'.

Pan and Kosicki pose that there are four categories representing four structural dimensions of news discourse: syntactical structure, script structure, thematic structure, and rhetorical structure (p. 59). Syntactical structures are described as the arrangement of words and phrases into sentences, which generally follow "macrosyntax", consisting of the inverted pyramid structure and sources attribution rules which characterize most news stories (p.59). The headline is considered the most powerful framing device of the syntactical structure as it is "the most salient cue to activate certain semantically related concepts in readers' minds" (p. 59). The lead is considered the next most important device; it gives the story a "newsworthy angle" and demonstrates the perspective through which to view the reported event (p. 60).

Script structures refer to news reports being constructed like stories. Pan and Kosicki note that this is the case because most news reports cover "concrete newsworthy events" which are stories "in the literal sense of describing events" (p. 60). The 'script' refers to the sequence of occurrences which constitute the event that is being reported, and the details surrounding them; the 'five Ws and one H' (who, what, when, where, why, and how), which is a familiar rule for establishing the vital information which should be included in the lead of a news story (p. 60).

Thematic structures are used when a news story consists of multiple developments or events surrounded one issue or topic (p. 60). Pan and Kosicki describe a story using a thematic structure as containing "certain hypothesis-testing features: events are cited, sources are quoted, and propositions are pronounced" (p. 60). The hypothesis-testing feature regularly occurs when a headline states a hypothesis, and examples, quotes, and background

information subsequently presented in the article are used to illustrate and support the hypothesis (p. 61).

The fourth and final structures discussed are rhetorical structures. Rhetorical structures describe “the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects” (p. 61). Journalists use rhetorical devices to enhance or emphasis a certain point, and conjure images in the reader’s mind. Pan and Kosicki claim that rhetorical structures also refer to “the tendency of news to tout its facticity” (p. 62). One such example that is offered is of the *New York Times* marking news stories that contain journalists’ own opinions and interpretations as “news analysis”, so as to promote the notion of the other news stories being entirely factual (p. 62).

Some of the news values discussed by Price and Tewksbury (1997) are reworked into news frames for the purposes of this study, following the set of frames theorized by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). An and Gower (2009) analysed media coverage of crisis news coverage using the news frames of Conflict, Human-Interest, Economic Consequence, Morality, and Responsibility, as seen in Semekto and Valkenburg’s (2000) work. The conflict frame is used to “reflect conflict and disagreement among individuals, groups or organisations”; the human-interest frame “brings a human face or emotional angle to the presentation of the event”; the economic consequence frame reports an event or issue in terms of “the consequence it will have economically on an individual, group or organisation”; the morality frame put an event “in the context of morals, social prescriptions, and religious tenants”; finally the responsibility frame involves “attributing responsibility for [an event’s] cause or solution to either the government or an individual or group” (An and Gower, 2009, p. 108).

One might expect to see the frames of conflict, responsibility, and economic consequence most frequently in the coverage of Brexit analysed in this study as these are the frames most commonly found in ‘serious’ news media and political coverage. Morality and human-interest would be less expected as they are less common in political news in broadsheet journalism; they may however be found more frequently in the political news article featuring in tabloids which tend to focus more on these aspects of the stories.

### **Framing of Brexit in UK news media**

Facebook has come under fire in the last couple of years for their involvement in the 2016 United States Presidential Campaign, allowing Cambridge Analytica access to 50 million user profiles. This has led to major reviews in how the media supply information to the public. Closer to home, the Facebook - Cambridge Analytica controversy was apparently also at play during the 2016 UK referendum to leave the European Union, more commonly referred to as ‘Brexit’ (Sehat, 2018).

Sehat explains that previous research carried out by Media Cloud found that approximately 70,000 articles were published on the subject of Brexit between 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018. It is noted that two of the major themes that reoccurred throughout these reports were ‘economy’ and ‘immigration’. Sehat (2018) goes onto explain how she analysed the tenor of the stories covering immigration using the ‘Bias Prism’, which she describes as “a Natural Language Processing tool that analyses language for expressions of personal perspective and potential bias”. She clarifies that this tool is able to evaluate texts through a number of considerations, including “sentiment or expressions of doubt” (Sehat, 2018). Employing this tool meant that Sehat (2018) was able to uncover that there were more

instances of “perspective and bias” appearing in the stories reporting on immigration than those reporting on the economy.

The research goes on to review three news articles, looking closely at their headlines and introductory sentences. It is found that the right-leaning *Daily Mail* article uses more negative language when it comes to presenting the figures on immigration and migration than that of the BBC and the more centrist *Telegraph* (Sehat, 2018). However, because the differences are relatively minor, Sehat (2018) suggests that this is less a case of bias and looks more at the idea of framing, as this can be a “natural human response to interpreting complex situations”.

### **Effects of Framing on Readers**

Garland (2019) notes that while identity and emotion played a part in the result of the referendum, the information provided to the public and the laws that regulate it are what needs attention if referendums are to continue to be a feature of democracy.

Interestingly, reports show that coverage leading up to the referendum was in fact biased towards the Leave campaign (Khabaz, 2018). After analysing 2,378 articles focused on the referendum, the Reuters Institute report reveals that, 41 percent were pro-Leave, while 27 percent had a pro-Remain frame (Khabaz, 2018). This is further exacerbated when you take into consideration the reach of the news outlets represented. For example, the strongest Leave stance was represented by the *Daily Express*, but the *Daily Mail* and *The Sun* reached a much wider audience. Factoring in this reach, the figures extend to 48 percent pro-Leave and only 22 percent pro-Remain (Khabaz, 2018). Khabaz (2018) notes that the aforementioned reports have “clearly established a link between national newspapers support of the ‘Leave the EU’ campaign and the referendum’s outcome” (p. 497). This begs the question of how

much of an effect did the media's coverage of the referendum campaigns have on reader's voting habits?

Doward and Gibbs (2017) report in *The Guardian* that Nigel Farage, former UKIP leader and supporter of the Leave campaign, was introduced to Cambridge Analytica by US billionaire and Trump supporter, Robert Mercer. Its chief executive Alexander Nix claims that the company "helped supercharge" Leave.EU's social media campaign, championed by Farage, "by ensuring the right messages are getting to the right voters online" (Doward and Gibbs, 2017).

### **Bias in News Media**

A study carried out by Eberl, Wagner and Boomgaarden (2018) in Austria assessed the affect political advertisements had on the tone and content of political articles appearing in the same newspapers, in relation to the 2013 Austrian general election. Eberl et al. (2018) firstly measured the visibility of the various political parties within the newspapers, as defined by "the relative amount of articles in which a party or candidates from that party are a speaker or addressee in at least one of the claims included" (p. 788). Secondly, the tonality through "positive and negative statements about political actors". Thirdly, to measure *agenda congruence*, the study used political parties' press releases "as an approximation of the respective parties' favoured issue agenda" (Eberl et al., p. 788).

The results of this research show that there was no great change to the content of the newspapers from "the average bias in the respective outlets" (Eberl et al., p. 789). The visibility bias was described as weak; the tonality bias was in keeping with previous elections, regardless of the number of political advertisements placed during the period of this study; agenda bias was the strongest, though not considerably so (Eberl et al., 2018). In

general, the bias was in keeping with the newspapers' own political views, regardless of advertising income from each political party. Eberl et al. (2018) claim that within the results "no overall relationship between party ads and media coverage is discernible" (p. 790).

It is possible that the research carried out in this project will yield similar results, in that the bias present in the articles on Brexit may reflect the average bias of the newspaper regarding their own traditional political affiliation, though that is still something of note.

It was reported in *The Huffington Post UK* that The University of Loughborough examined the tone of coverage of the EU referendum in various newspapers and claimed that, when weighted by circulation, "Leave has an "82% to 18% advantage over Remain" (Ridley, 2016). This data was considering articles written in the lead up to the referendum vote in June 2016, however, there has so far been little research done on similar trends in the lead-up to the October 2019 Brexit deadline, as this research project does.

Looking at a similar timeframe of 2015-2016, a study was carried out by Stefanie Walter (2019) which investigated the relationship between the negative portrayal of EU citizens and the type of news outlet in Brexit news. Walter notes how a previous study (Allen, 2016) looked at how migrants from EU member states were portrayed in national newspapers, and how "the number of migrants" was a "problem" (Walter, 2019 , p. 212). Another study (Cheregi, 2015) showed how fear mongering terms were included in British newspapers, reporting about "a flood of migrants entering the United Kingdom" (Walter, p. 213). Walter's hypothesis that EU citizens would be more visible in tabloids than broadsheets was not supported by the empirical evidence, while the hypothesis that EU citizens would more visible in regional newspapers than national newspapers was also not supported (2019, p. 220-1). It was also found that there was "no significant difference" in the

likelihood of mentions of EU citizens between outlets that advised their readers to vote Leave and those that did not (Walter, 2019, p. 221).

Walter concludes by noting that EU citizens were not more likely to be mentioned in Brexit news “with a more negative sentiment”, and that EU citizens were “generally less likely to be mentioned in regional newspapers” as news coverage of regional press is less “Europeanized” (2019, p. 225). While Walter’s study focuses on regional versus national newspapers, and looks at broadsheet versus tabloid, this research project examines coverage between broadsheet/compact newspapers with different political affiliations, on which there has been less focus.

## **Conclusion**

Having reviewed previous research into news media coverage and its makeup, several areas were found to be of importance in understanding how and why news media is presented as it is. The news values discussed by Price and Tewksbury (1997) have a major influence on the kinds of events that are reported in the news media. They are essential in deciphering what the media deems newsworthy, and in turn, what news readers are consuming.

This leads on to how that news is presented to the reader, in the form of the news frames theorized by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). These frames are an excellent way of understanding the different angles from which journalists approach a story and which aspects they choose to emphasize to the reader. As is generally the case with reports on political individuals and events, the frames of conflict, responsibility and economic consequence are expected to feature most prominently in the sample of articles selected for this study.

The language used in these articles is expected to help understand the attitude of each publication to the individuals and events on which they are reporting. Pan and Kosicki’s



(1993) structures of news discourse - syntactical, script, thematic, and rhetorical - will be considered when analysing the language used to describe individuals and their actions in the news coverage. The headline of each article will also be analysed, as it is the first thing - and sometimes only thing - that one reads, often giving a specific impression of the events that occurred, which tends to stay with the reader even if subsequent information paints a slightly different picture.

The aim of this research project is to consider all of the aforementioned elements of news reporting, in order to investigate the similarities and difference in the news media coverage of Brexit in the lead up to the deadline on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019. This aim can be broken down into the following four research questions:

1. What are the values that lead to certain Brexit developments being reported in the British news media?
2. How are reports covering Brexit framed in the news media?
3. How are UK and EU politicians portrayed in the news media?
4. Do these values, frames and portrayals differ between publications?

## Chapter III - Methodology

The methodology for this research project is qualitative content analysis. News content from three UK newspapers was analysed. In order to get a sense of the news articles that were published in the lead-up to the October 2019 Brexit deadline, a range of articles were selected from three publications, namely *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times*, which are some of the UK's most widely circulated broadsheet newspapers. As these publications have a range of different political affiliations, they were expected to represent a diverse portrayal of news stories and readership.

Multiple reports on the developments in the Brexit negotiations appearing in these publications were examined in the hope that different angles and approaches to the news stories would be identified, and then compared and contrasted across the various news outlets. The articles selected appeared in the various publications between Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October and Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

Media content analysis was introduced in 1927 as “a systematic method to study mass media” by Harold Lasswell, initially intended for the study of propaganda, according to an essay by Jim Macnamara (2005, p. 1). Macnamara notes that media content analysis became increasingly popular as a research methodology during the 1920s and 1930s “for investigating the rapidly expanding communication content of movies” (2005, p. 1). In the 1950s then, “with the arrival of the television”, media content analysis was adapted as a research methodology in mass communication studies and social sciences, and since then it has been a primary research method “for studying portrayals of violence, racism and women in television programming as well as in films” (Macnamara, 2005, p. 1).

More recently, content analysis has been defined as a research method “that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text” (Weber, 1990, p. 9), and as a research technique “that is based on measuring the amount of something” (Berger, 1991, p.25).

Neuman (1997) also described content analysis as:

“A technique for gathering and analysing the content of text. The ‘content’ refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated. The ‘text’ is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication” (pp. 272–273).

In the case of this research project, the content analysed was the headline, language used within the text, news values, and news frames. Hijams (1996) suggests that analysis methods applicable to the analysis of media content include “text analysis, narrative analysis, rhetorical analysis, discourse analysis, interpretative analysis and semiotic analysis”, as well as “some of the techniques used in literary studies such as critical analysis” (p. 93).

Frame analysis is a common methodological approach taken to understand the context in which news stories are presented. Entman (1993) claims that frames enable journalists to “select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text” (p. 51). Furthermore, it is argued that it is “unlikely for people to fully understand certain aspects of complex events happening around them”, and that they must instead “continually apply interpretive schemas or ‘primary frames’ to categorize information to construe those events meaningfully” (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2006). Therefore, in the context of news articles informing the public on Brexit negotiations, this suggests that frames are necessary in order to simplify and explain the events as they unfold in a manner that the ‘ordinary man’ will understand.

The different elements of news framing were also taken into consideration. Entman (1993) notes there are many different locations when it comes to framing, including the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. Therefore, it was important to take all of these into account when considering what effect that the articles have on readers. For example, the language or manner in which a politician is described, on either side of the debate, may differ from culture to culture, so it is important to be considerate of the norm in Britain when assessing the media content.

As well as selecting content from publications of differing political affiliations, Macnamara suggests that in collecting samples, a combination of “typical, disconfirming and exceptional examples for study” must be chosen (2005, p. 18). He also notes that qualitative analysis can “explore the boundaries of the data field and identify the range of views”, which include views varying from the typical to the discordant and extreme (Macnamara, 2005, p. 18). Considering the political affiliations of the news outlets was also important in assessing their potential bias, as they are more likely to present the news in such a manner as to complement their own views and that of their readers.

After research into the origins of news values, news frames and how language is used in the media, as discussed in the previous chapter, assessment of the overall approach to reporting of each newspaper was done and then compared to the others in the study. This approach to the research project was selected as it was believed to best help achieve the most accurate answers to the research questions. As discussed in the Literature Review, these questions included:

1. What are the values that lead to certain Brexit developments being reported in the British news media?
2. How are reports covering Brexit framed in the news media?

3. How are UK and EU politicians portrayed in the news media?
4. Do these values, frames and portrayals differ between publications?

When it came to establishing which articles would be included in the sample for this study, searches were carried out on the website for each respective newspaper and also accessed on Lexis Nexis. A search for articles containing “Brexit” and each of the dates of the time period selected was done, bringing up all of the articles published in that publication. As the time period was determined to be from 17<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> October, one article from each of these days was selected at random from each newspaper to be analysed. This brought the sample of articles to fifteen per newspaper, totalling forty-five articles. Some articles that were initially considered subsequently turned out to mention Brexit in the headline or lead paragraph, but not be about it extensively, so were disregarded and replaced with one focusing more on the topic at hand. Similarly, Letter-to-the Editor and Opinion pieces were dismissed so as not to influence the overall result. Tables containing all of the articles included in the sample can be found in the fourth chapter of this study, accompanying the analysis, and also in the Appendices chapter.

The headlines of each of the articles were individually examined and divided into categories based on their mentions of Boris Johnson, other MPs, and EU leaders. It was thought that counting the number of mentions of each of the aforementioned individuals would be indicative of the publications likelihood to report on domestic or European politicians, and their attitude to those in question. The same was then done for mentions of the EU and other member states. This also helped to determine a publications tendency towards reporting was more domestic or Eurocentric. Headlines are one of the most important components of an article because they are the first impression a reader receives of

the report. As a result, a detailed report of positive versus negative headlines, and the number of mentions of each individual involved, including the manner in which they were mentioned, was assembled.

Each of the selected articles were then read and analysed to determine which news values were present. This was done in order to evaluate the features of an event which made it more likely to be reported in each newspaper, and whether the frequency of each value differed from one newspaper to another. A table of the news values and their definitions can be found in the previous Literature Review chapter. Only one value was altered from its usual definition, in that References to Elite Nations was not counted when there was mention of the UK or the EU. Given the fact that Brexit negotiations could not take place without either of these unions, it is assumed that coverage on the matter would include mention of at least one of them. Therefore, in order to determine which events involving these unions were reported in the newspapers, it was decided that the Elite Nations news value would only be counted if mention was made of a specific superpower, either within the EU or elsewhere. Generally, each news value was found a similar number of times in each newspaper, with only a few instances of a significant difference from one newspaper to another.

The news frames present in each article were also noted at this stage. Brexit is a multifaceted issue, so on occasion there was more than one frame present in the articles. However, for clarity, it was decided that consideration would only be given to the most dominant frame noted in each article. Given the political nature of the coverage, Morality and Human-Interest were not present in the articles as frequently as the remaining frames of Conflict, Responsibility and Economic Consequences.

Finally, a detailed analysis of the language used to describe the people mentioned in the articles was carried out. This process was undertaken in order to establish any trends in

the language used to describe certain politicians or the actions across the articles from each newspaper, and then in comparison to the other newspapers. Boris Johnson was found to have received more negative mentions than anyone else, due in part to the fact that he received more mentions overall than any other politician or head of state. There were also many mentions not included in the results because they were of a neutral nature, as is more often the case with broadsheet newspapers.

After these analyses were concluded it was possible to form answers to the research questions posed in the beginning. Results based on this analysis and discussion surrounding trends across the three newspapers can be found in the next chapter.

## Chapter IV – Results and Discussion

### Analysis of News Values

In analysing the news values present in the Brexit coverage, it was found that overall, the same trends were found across the three newspapers. Generally, each news value was found a similar number of times in each newspaper. For example, there were fifteen counts of References to Elite People in *The Telegraph*, with fourteen mentions in *The Guardian*, and eleven in *The Times*. The same trend was found with the less frequent values, such as Personification, which appears in all three newspapers the least number of times, with only seven mentions throughout the total sample.

	<b>The Telegraph</b>	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>The Times</b>
<b>Total News Values</b>	104	109	100
<b>Average per article</b>	6.9	7.2	6.6

**Table 2.** Comparison of total number of News Values.

In total, one hundred and four news values appear in the fifteen articles from *The Telegraph*, at an average of 6.9 per article. One hundred and nine appear in *The Guardian*, averaging at 7.2 per article. Finally, *The Times* featured one hundred news values spread over its sample, averaging 6.6 per article. Given that Brexit is a complex issue spread over a long period of time and with many players involved, it is perhaps unsurprising that there were so many news values present in the total sample, with between 6.6 and 7.2 on average per article.



Reference to Elite People, Continuity, and Unambiguity were most common values in the total sample. The least common news values were found to be Personification and Composition. A table of the news values considered and their meaning, as discussed by Galtung and Ruge (1965), can be found in the Literature Review chapter.

News Values	The Telegraph	The Guardian	The Times	Total
Frequency	9	11	14	34
Threshold	8	10	7	25
Unambiguity	12	9	14	35
Meaningfulness	12	11	5	28
Consonance	10	5	10	25
Unexpectedness	4	10	5	19
Continuity	12	13	13	38
Composition	5	9	1	15
Reference to Elite Nations	5	6	9	20
Reference to Elite People	15	14	11	40
Personification	1	3	3	7
Negativity	11	8	8	27

*Table 3. Comparison of News Values between newspapers.*

### Reference to Elite People

The most common news value noted was that of reference to elite people. This is unsurprising considering that Brexit is negotiated by a vast number of British and European politicians whose actions are more likely to be reported than those of ordinary members of society. A reader is also much more likely to engage with a piece referencing an elite person, rather than an ordinary member of society.

As discussed in the section on headline analysis, most frequently mentioned person was Boris Johnson. Johnson appeared in eleven of *The Times*' articles, twelve of *The*

*Guardian*'s, and thirteen of *The Telegraph*'s. He was followed by Jeremy Corbyn and other MPs, and then key EU leaders such as Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker.

### Continuity

The second most common news value was continuity. Events are more likely to be reported if they have already appeared in the media. Given that Brexit was such a long process, the continuity news value was, as expected, among the most frequently noted. The most commonly reported events in this time period at the end of October 2019, were negotiations between the UK and EU on the deadline extension, and between Boris Johnson, the Labour Party, and other MPs regarding the possibility of a UK general election.

### Unambiguity

The next most common news value was unambiguity. Brexit is such a complex issue with many parts that clear and concise news reporting is required in order to grab the attention of the reader, and for them to understand the events that are taking place. All three newspapers were seen to give clear explanations of the events being reported and the people involved. The journalists carefully explained each new development to the extension negotiations.

An article published by *The Guardian* on October 20<sup>th</sup> detailed how Boris Johnson had recently written two letters to the EU. In one he asked for an extension to the Brexit deadline, and in the next he “urged EU leaders to ignore” this request (Carrell, 2019). The article goes on to explain that under the Benn Act (the EU Withdrawal [No 2] Act 2019), Johnson was required to request an extension following Parliament’s failure to either pass his

deal, or explicitly approve of leaving the EU without a deal, by October 19<sup>th</sup>. A dropdown Q&A section was also included in the article to further explain the Benn Act, and a link access to the full text of the Act was provided.

A complicated issue was laid out clearly and explained well to the reader. This was the case in the vast majority of news articles in the sample, and therefore the reason that unambiguity appears so often in the above table.

### Frequency

Frequency is described as the time span of an event, or how long the event takes to come to fruition. The circumstances surrounding Brexit were changing almost daily at the time of the October deadline, therefore the events that were being reported were small developments with almost immediate effect. This led to the frequency value appearing quite often in the sample.

### Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness appears when the news story contains information with direct relevance to the reader. This value appeared twelve times in *The Telegraph*, eleven times in *The Guardian*, and only five times in *The Times*. This would seem to suggest that *The Telegraph* and *The Guardian* are more likely to include events, or information, that appeals to the reader's own location or circumstances than *The Times*.

The fact that meaningfulness appears so often is perhaps due to the fact that the circumstances in which the UK leave the EU have major impacts on the lives of British

citizens, and so many of the news articles were reporting on events which will affect their readers directly.

### Negativity

Negativity was expected to be quite common among the news values found here as it is a common feature of news articles in general. Events and developments with a negative outcome are more appealing and more likely to catch the attention of the reader. The majority of negative news articles found in the sample were in relation to the extension of the Brexit deadline.

An article published in *The Times* on October 22<sup>nd</sup> featured the headline “No-deal Brexit will never be the EU’s decision, says Donald Tusk”. It went on to describe how Tusk’s comments were “deeply unhelpful to the prime minister” because they send a message to MPs that they do not need to rush a deal through the House of Commons, because an extension would be a certainty under the Benn Act (Waterfield, 2019). The article then reports that Guy Verhofstadt, the European Parliament’s chief negotiator, said that if MEPs ratify the deal before new concessions were made from the government on the rights of EU nationals, then “up to 200,000 European nationals would miss a government deadline to register for settled status and would be at risk of deportation in a repeat of the Windrush scandal” (Waterfield, 2019).

The mention of the Windrush scandal and that a huge number of people could potentially face the same fate is exactly the kind of negative news that captures a reader’s attention and helps to explain why so many of the news articles feature the negative news value.

### Threshold

The bigger the event, and the more people it affects, the more likely it is to be featured in a newspaper. This value was seen in over half the news articles in the total sample. Considering that Brexit has such a big effect on the British public, it is no surprise that threshold featured as often as this. While some news reported on smaller developments in the process, many focused on the bigger issue that would affect the most people, and so threshold was noted quite frequently.

One article which focused on the size of the event itself, was a report in *The Guardian* on October 19<sup>th</sup> covering a protest march which took place in London. It was noted as “one of the largest public demonstrations in British history, with a crowd estimated at around one million” marching outside parliament demanding a second referendum on Brexit (Townsend, 2019). This protest was itself a large event, and also had the potential to be of significant consequence to a huge number of people had their demands been met.

### Consonance

All of the articles analysed in this sample were covering the same broader topic of Brexit, so it is of little surprise that consonance featured in more than half of the articles, at twenty-five times. Though some developments were less expected than others, many were the result of the natural progression of the process of negotiations and so were deemed to contain the consonance news value.

Over this relatively short period of time, from October 17<sup>th</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>, there were multiple articles focusing on both the potential Brexit deadline extension and UK general election. One such article appeared in *The Telegraph* on October 25<sup>th</sup> quoting Geoffrey Cox MP as saying that they were dealing with a “dead parliament” and that an election was badly

needed (Bennett, 2019). Given that the parliament at the time were unsuccessful in their passing of Johnson's Brexit deal, it is not unexpected that Cox would make a statement such as this, and that agreeing on a pre-Christmas general election would be the way forward.

### Reference to Elite Nations

While virtually all of the news articles included mention of the UK or EU, it was determined that this news value would only be counted if specific mention of elite nations (within the EU or beyond) was made. As explained in the Methodology chapter, the vast majority of events surrounding Brexit could not take place without mention of the EU, therefore it was a question of which events related to Brexit would make the news, and if mention of specific elite countries made it more likely for an event to be reported.

There were several mentions of France, Germany, and a few of the United States. One article published in *The Guardian* on October 28<sup>th</sup> focused on the EU beginning to plan for trade negotiations after the UK had agreed to an extension. The piece featured mentions of Germany, the French government, and Emmanuel Macron's insistence that "very clear conditions be written 'in black and white' to allow the UK's Brexit extension" (Boffey and Chrisafis, 2019).

### Unexpectedness

The opposite of the consonance news value; unexpectedness is also newsworthy. Unexpectedness featured quite low in the count for the total sample, with just nineteen articles out of the forty-five analysed, but as mentioned in the consonance section, with the

minor daily developments occurring during this time, it was not terribly often that events occurred that were unexpected.

One example of an unexpected event can be seen in the October 31<sup>st</sup> article published in *The Guardian*, covering the halt to the anti-human trafficking measures at Glasgow airport. While other events surrounding Brexit and the delay were predictable, this uncertainty surrounding the outcome left border police faced with an unforeseen issue of the suspension of their partnership with Romanian officers “travelling to Scotland to deal with ‘high-risk’ flights from their country” (Grierson, 2019). This partnership came into effect in 2018 but was suspended in February.

Unexpectedness is one of the few news values where a significant difference is seen in the number of times it was noted in each newspaper. While only present four times in *The Telegraph* and five in *The Times*, *The Guardian* features ten articles detailing an unexpected event. Many of the events that were deemed unexpected revolve around the progress of the extension to the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. Perhaps the inclusion of such events that appear unexpected is an attempt by *The Guardian* to portray an image of uncertainty and a lack of governmental control to proceedings, which is not as apparent in the other two publications.

### Composition

Composition was the second least common news value. It did not feature frequently in the sample because the vast majority of articles focused solely on the issue of Brexit, and usually on only one aspect of the process. While the definition of this news value can include a mix of domestic and foreign news featuring in news articles, the nature of Brexit means that the UK and EU will almost always be mentioned. As mentioned in the Reference of Elite Nations section, the process of Brexit could not happen without the involvement of the UK

and EU, so it was more of a question of which of the events went on to make the news. Therefore, it was determined to not consider mentions of the UK and EU as resulting in composition articles. This may help to explain why composition features so far down in the count.

### Personification

The least common news value of all was personification, appearing only seven times through the total sample. This news value was not expected to feature in many of the news articles in the sample because Brexit is a political matter and the news media outlets considered in the study rarely apply a personal frame to the events being reported. This news value is more likely to appear in tabloid media who use personification as a way of capturing the reader's attention. While there were numerous mentions of politicians and other leaders, there was little personification seen as they were only ever discussed in a professional capacity. Perhaps when the full effects of Brexit are in place and applied to the ordinary British citizens, we will see more pieces containing personification in order to bring home the realities of the situation that now faces them.

### Conclusions

The total number of each news value was generally as expected because political news reports tend to consist of the same values. News featuring elite people or with direct relevance to the reader is also going to feature heavily as it attracts the greatest audience.

In comparing the values seen in articles across all three newspapers, the same trends generally occurred, with each value usually being noted a similar number of times from paper



to paper. This was the case with the more frequent values such as Unambiguity and Continuity, and also the less frequent like Personification and Composition. These values are not common among news reports covering political issues, or in the types of publications included in this study, and are more often found in tabloid news.

The reason for continuity featuring so prominently is perhaps due to Brexit being such a lengthy process that the one larger story is spread out over a longer period of time, detailing each step in the operation as it happens. Similarly, with unambiguity, the complex nature of Brexit and its negotiations require clear and concise reporting, which is a feature of all the newspapers contained in the sample. Regarding references to elite people, with so many politicians involved in the numerous decisions and agreements involved in negotiating the UK's departure, almost all of the articles contains mentions of politicians both in Westminster and Brussels.

Only a few news values see a notable difference in occurrences between the three newspapers. Unexpectedness and meaningfulness both differed somewhat in their frequencies, with meaningfulness appearing twelve times in *The Telegraph*, eleven times in *The Guardian*, and only five time in *The Times*. This is perhaps indicative of *The Times* style of reporting the news in a more direct way than either of the other two newspapers, who make more of effort to encourage the audience to relate to the report.

### **Analysis of News Frames**

The analysis of the news articles shows that four frames were present in the coverage of Brexit over the two-week period. The frames of Conflict and Responsibility were the two most frequently used frames. Economic Consequence and Human-Interest followed, with

significantly fewer uses than the other two frames. Morality was the only frame to not appear as the most prominent frame in any of the news articles across the entire sample.

News Frame	The Telegraph	The Guardian	The Times	Total
<b>Conflict</b>	8	11	6	25
<b>Human-Interest</b>	0	1	0	1
<b>Economic Consequence</b>	1	1	3	5
<b>Morality</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Responsibility</b>	6	2	5	13
<b>N/A</b>	0	0	1	1

*Table 4. Comparison of News Frames between newspapers.*

The conflict frame appears most often, in twenty-five of the forty-five articles, accounting for 56 percent of the total sample. This was followed by the responsibility frame, which accounts for thirteen articles, at 29 percent of the total sample. Following that is the significantly less frequent economic consequence frame, seen as the dominant frame in only five articles, coming in at 11 percent of the sample. The human-interest frame appeared only once in the total sample, accounting for 2 percent of the total sample.

Finally, one article from *The Times* was determined to not have any of the above as the dominant frame, nor did it have another identifiable frame, accounting for the final 2 percent of the sample. It was an article published on October 19<sup>th</sup> reporting how official parliamentary records show how often terms relating to Brexit were discussed. For example, “backstop” was mentioned three times more than “homelessness”, while “no deal” was discussed twice as much as “crime” (Calver, 2019). While certainly an interesting article, it was determined to not fit into any of the above five frames.

## **Conflict Frame**

The conflict frame was the most dominant in the majority of articles from *The Telegraph*. It accounts for 53 percent of the articles from the newspapers. One such example is the October 22<sup>nd</sup> article headlined “DUP says Boris Johnson has lost their respect as they vote against Brexit deal”, in which the DUP are reported to have voted against the second reading of Boris Johnson’s Withdrawal Agreement as it “creates a border in the Irish Sea and the [DUP] will not support it” (Rothwell and Mikhailova, 2019).

Articles from *The Guardian* show an even greater representation of the conflict frame, as it appears in 73 percent of the newspaper’s total sample. Conflict dominates all of the coverage included in *The Guardian* sample from October 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, covering discussions between Boris Johnson and his fellow MPs, and between the UK and the EU. Given that at this stage the deadline was within days, it is perhaps of little surprise that tensions were high, and that conflict was the dominant frame in news coverage. An article from October 30<sup>th</sup> reports conflict between Boris Johnson and Labour Party Leader Jeremy Corbyn, stating that Corbyn “set the stage for his campaign by calling voters to kick out Johnson’s Conservatives who think they are ‘born to rule’” (Mason, 2019).

*The Times* had the fewest number of conflict frames detected, though still a significant percentage of its own sample, at 40 percent. One such article, published on October 31<sup>st</sup>, depicts another disagreement between Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn. It claims that Corbyn, “in one of his central attacks on Mr Johnson”, said that “the NHS is up for grabs by US corporations in a one-sided Trump sell-out”, and that the Labour Party will stop the Conservatives from letting “Donald Trump get his hands on our National Health Service” (Elliott, Swinford and Smyth, 2019).

### **Human-Interest Frame**

The human-interest frame appeared only once in the entire sample, in an article published by *The Guardian* on October 31<sup>st</sup> reporting on the issue of anti-human trafficking measures at Glasgow airport being “halted” and “suspended because of Brexit uncertainty” (Grierson, 2019). The article goes on to discuss the incident in which thirty-nine bodies were found in a lorry container in Essex the previous week, believed to have been “trafficked or smuggled to the UK and to have arrived in Purfleet docks by ferry via Zeebrugge in Belgium” (Grierson, 2019).

No articles covering Brexit that had human-interest as the dominant frame appeared in the sample for either *The Telegraph* or *The Times* for the period October 17<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> 2019.

### **Economic Consequence Frame**

The economic consequence appeared in *The Telegraph* only once over the given time period. An article published on October 23<sup>rd</sup> claims that the “markets are mixed amid return to Brexit limbo” and that though sterling is still near a “five-month high”, it has fallen “below \$1.29 after MPs reject Brexit bill” (Ashworth, 2019).

*The Guardian* also had only one article with economic consequence as the dominant frame, with an October 29<sup>th</sup> piece on the National Farmers’ Union unhappiness that the government “has ignored pleas to put tariffs on eggs to protect against cheaper rivals from countries such as the US where caging hens is allowed” (O’Carroll, 2019).

Three articles from *The Times* focused on economic consequences, accounting for 20 percent of its sample. October 18<sup>th</sup>’s article features a quote from Longworth, a former

director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, claiming that after the UK leave the EU, “the gravitational pull provided by the booming UK economic situation will drag Northern Ireland out” (Hope and Louloudis, 2019). Longworth goes on to claim that the EU will “decline” in the future which may lead to a change in the dynamic between the Republic of Ireland and the UK (Hope and Louloudis, 2019).

### **Responsibility Frame**

*The Telegraph* had the most occurrences of the responsibility frame compared to the other two newspapers, with 40 percent of its sample containing this frame. An article from October 27<sup>th</sup> includes Liberal Democrats Leader Jo Swinson, “challenging Labour to back her proposed Bill for an election on December 9 as it would remove the threat of a no-deal Brexit, as Jeremy Corbyn had demanded” (Hymas, 2019). It goes on to reference that because sources within Number 10 indicated that they would consider such a Bill, Swinson said, “They [Labour] should be able to support it” (Hymas, 2019).

*The Guardian* had only two articles identified as being in the responsibility frame, at just 13 percent of its sample. An article published on October 20<sup>th</sup> reports how Boris Johnson could be held in contempt of court “after he urged leaders to ignore a letter asking for an extension to the Brexit deadline” (Carrell, 2019). While being taken to court would usually imply some kind of conflict, the way this article is presented does not clearly supply a second party and so was deemed to be in the responsibility frame. Judges, such as Lord Carloway, are mentioned but only in the context of hearing allegations, and they are of course, by nature of the job, impartial.

Five articles from *The Times* were determined to be within the responsibility frame, accounting for 33 percent of its sample. One such article was published on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and

depicts a rare moment of peace between the UK and the EU during this period, with Boris Johnson telling the chamber that the extension was “in the hands of the EU” and that he would see what they do with it (Elliott et al., 2019). Likewise, the EU were willing to grant a “flexible” three-month extension with the possibility of the UK leaving sooner if they agree on a deal.

### **Framing Conclusions**

In the days immediately leading up to the deadline, October 23<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, as previously discussed, *The Guardian*’s main frame was conflict, whereas *The Telegraph* and *The Times* both have more responsibility frames appearing. This seems to suggest that the latter two newspapers are more inclined to attribute responsibility to one or other of the parties involved in the event.

Interestingly, the responsibility frame was most likely to appear in *The Telegraph*’s pieces discussing the extension to the Brexit deadline, while the conflict frame was most often found in pieces discussing the election. The fact that *The Telegraph* has slightly more responsibility than conflict framed articles also seems to suggest that it attributes responsibility to one side while perhaps not acknowledging the other as much.

It is interesting that there are so many articles which were found to be in the category of the responsibility frame, without crossing over into conflict. Though many of the articles had conflict as a minor frame, and vice versa, this perhaps shows that the media are not as biased as some would think in favour of one side or the other. It also shows that they are more inclined to identify the individual or group responsible for the cause, or solution, or an event, without pitting them against those on the other side. *The Telegraph* article from October 27<sup>th</sup> as mentioned in the responsibility frame analysis is an excellent example of how

the responsibility frame can portray a certain individual or group to be the cause, or solution, of an event, without framing it as conflict between the parties involved.

It is possible that the nature of politics itself accounts in part for the number of responsibility framed articles. When one considers that a relatively small number of elected officials are appointed to perform these duties, such as negotiating the UK withdrawal from the EU, it is not difficult to identify who was responsible for the issue at hand, or who is the one to find a solution.

### **Introduction to Headline Analysis**

According to Trumbo (1996), ‘journalistic tradition holds that the headline and lead should be written to inform the reader as to what is most important about the story’ (p. 272). The headline can have a huge impact on the reader because they are the first clue to what the article will entail. They control the angle to which the reader comes at the story and have the ability to change the way people read an article and the way they remember it (Konnikova, 2014). A headline can frame the rest of the experience of reading the piece. It can tell the reader what kind of article they are about to read - whether it is a news article, an opinion piece, research - and it sets the tone for what follows (Konnikova, 2014).

Tabloids and other popular news media outlets often lean towards emotional headlines and include clearly identifiable ‘good guys’ and ‘bad guys’. Given that the three newspapers included in this study are broadsheet or compact outlets, it is unsurprising that they are not as clear-cut in their stances as one might expect from tabloids in relation to reporting on Brexit.

## **The Telegraph Headlines**

Out of the fifteen articles selected from *The Telegraph*, nine were found to include Boris Johnson's name in the headline. Seven mention other MPs or political parties, including Jo Swinson and Jeremy Corbyn, while only two mentioned the EU. Given the uncertainty surrounding the general election in these couple of weeks leading up to the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, it is perhaps unsurprising that the focus was somewhat shifted to the election and its impact on the deadline, rather than solely on Brexit.

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Telegraph Headlines</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit deal latest news: Boris Johnson to give MPs 'my deal or no deal' ultimatum after EU rules out extension
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris's Brexit deal is a 'fresh start' after years of 'division and doubt' says Cabinet minister Robert Jenrick
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Nigel Farage: 'Only an election can solve Brexit impasse'
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces 'guerilla war' over new vote on Brexit deal
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	How Boris Johnson's big Brexit deal week could leave him forced by MPs to agree to a delay
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	DUP says Boris Johnson has lost their respect as they vote against Brexit deal
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Markets mixed as UK returns to Brexit limbo
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson challenges Jeremy Corbyn to 'end this nightmare' with a general election on December 12
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris needs an election to slay this zombie Parliament, which has Brexit in its deathly grip
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Arlene Foster tells Boris Johnson to renegotiate his Brexit deal again in barbed DUP conference speech
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Jo Swinson 'relishes' December election as way to force Brexit extension
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson puts Brexit deal on ice to force general election



<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	No-deal Brexit odds: Latest predictions on leaving the EU without a deal
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit Party could help Tories in general election by not fighting hundreds of seats
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	The Remainder plot to turn October 31 into Brexit's funeral day has backfired

***Table 5. The Telegraph Headlines***

Headlines that were sympathetic to Boris Johnson were only seen in *The Telegraph*, with six headlines showing support and particularly sympathy for the Prime Minister. October 21<sup>st</sup>'s headline read "How Boris Johnson's big Brexit deal week could leave him forced by MPs to agree to a delay", while October 20<sup>th</sup>'s reads "Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces 'guerrilla war' over new vote on Brexit deal".

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Telegraph Headlines showing sympathy for Boris Johnson</b>
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces 'guerilla war' over new vote on Brexit deal
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	How Boris Johnson's big Brexit deal week could leave him forced by MPs to agree to a delay
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	DUP says Boris Johnson has lost their respect as they vote against Brexit deal
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson challenges Jeremy Corbyn to 'end this nightmare' with a general election on December 12
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris needs an election to slay this zombie Parliament, which has Brexit in its deathly grip
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Arlene Foster tells Boris Johnson to renegotiate his Brexit deal again in barbed DUP conference speech

***Table 6. The Telegraph Headlines showing sympathy for Boris Johnson***

Similarly, four headlines portray Johnson's fellow MPs or the EU as being the cause of the problems. An October 24<sup>th</sup> headline reading "Boris Johnson challenges Jeremy Corbyn to 'end this nightmare' with a general election on December 12", clearly suggesting that it is Corbyn who is responsible for the 'nightmare' delay in proceedings.

With reference to the fact that a headline has the power to influence the way a reader approaches an article, it is worth noting whether the headline is phrased in a positive or negative manner towards the subject it concerns. When looking at the headlines for the weeks concerned, it was found that *The Telegraph* included nine headlines which were considered negative, one positive, four neutral, and one which was interpreted as being neutral to negative.

It was found that the negative headlines were almost always - seven out of the nine – connected to a negative development or outcome for Boris Johnson. For example, the October 22<sup>nd</sup> headline of "DUP says Boris Johnson has lost their respect as they vote against Brexit deal". However, the positive headline related to positive news for Boris Johnson; for example, the headline of an article published on October 18<sup>th</sup> reads "Boris's Brexit deal is a 'fresh start' after years of 'division and doubt' says Cabinet minister Robert Jenrick", implying that he is proposing a good deal.

Regarding a headline's influence on the reader, whether or not anyone else quoted in the article agreed or disagreed with this opinion, the reader is being encouraged to agree that Johnson's deal is a good idea, given that studies have found that one is influenced by biased information, no matter what one is subsequently told (Konnikova, 2014). Though the quote is not biased in itself, placing it in the headline of the article encourages the reader to agree with the statement, as it is the first impression they receive of the situation.

As it turns out, the article includes only one other source, Brexit Party MEP John Longworth, who suggests that the Republic of Ireland may soon follow the UK out of the EU in order to maintain economic arrangements with the UK which are of benefit to Ireland. However, there is no supporting evidence shown in the article to suggest that Ireland is likely to follow the UK out of the EU. This claim comes after a 2018 poll carried out by *Claire Byrne Live* which found that only 10 percent of those that took part in a survey were in favour of the Republic of Ireland leaving the EU, with 79 percent against leaving, and 11 percent were unsure. This goes to show that while the quote in the headline was Jenrick's own opinion, it is not backed up in the article, yet aims to influence the reader's opinion by being the first impression they receive when they open the article.

A headline from October 31<sup>st</sup> reads "The Remainer plot to turn October 31 into Brexit's funeral day has backfired". This was regarded as neutral to negative because it shows the Remainers to have been unsuccessful in their efforts, but seems to suggest a positive outcome for Johnson. It also suggests an alignment to Johnson and fellow Brexiteers' position, given that it refers to the Remainers as 'plotting' and having their plan 'backfire', which are words with typically negative connotations.

### **The Guardian Headlines**

*The Guardian's* fifteen articles were found to feature ten negative and five positive headlines. Positive headlines include October 21<sup>st</sup>'s, "EU would agree to Brexit delay, says German minister". Three of the five positive headlines reference the EU making moves or statements in agreement with a Brexit extension. For example, the aforementioned German minister's quote from October 21<sup>st</sup>, and October 28<sup>th</sup>'s "EU begins planning for trade negotiations after UK agrees to Brexit extension".

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Guardian Headlines</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson plays numbers game after securing Brexit deal
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	PM faces Brexit extension even if his deal is passed
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	March organisers hail ‘one of the greatest protest marches in British history’
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson could be held in contempt of court over Brexit letter
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	EU would agree to Brexit delay, says German minister
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	EU signals it is likely to give UK a Brexit delay up to 31 January
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Election rumours intensify after Johnson and Corbyn Brexit stalemate
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU set to put Brexit delay on hold after Johnson's ultimatum
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU delays Brexit extension decision as France piles pressure on MPs
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Johnson's Halloween nightmare: how PM's Brexit tactics fell apart
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Labour will only agree to election if Johnson forbids no-deal Brexit
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU begins planning for trade negotiations after UK agrees to Brexit extension
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	No-deal Brexit means return of battery eggs, farmers' union warns
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit: Parliament breaks deadlock with vote for 12 December election
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	“Brexit uncertainty” halts anti-trafficking work in Glasgow

*Table 7. The Guardian Headlines*

Differing somewhat to *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* had seven headlines which referenced “the PM” or Boris Johnson by name. Interestingly, all seven mentions of Johnson

feature in the negative headlines. There are no headlines in *The Guardian* sample that are both positive and included reference to Johnson. An October 24<sup>th</sup> headline reads “EU set to put Brexit delay on hold after Johnson’s ultimatum”. While an October 17<sup>th</sup> headline reads “Boris Johnson plays numbers game after securing Brexit deal”. This one is slightly less straightforward in its disapproval of Johnson, but the inclusion of the phrase “plays numbers game” has a negative association, which could potentially be implying some kind of wrongdoing or untruthfulness on Johnson’s part.

	<b>The Telegraph</b>	<b>The Guardian</b>	<b>The Times</b>
<b>Boris Johnson</b>	9	7	6
<b>MPs / UK Parties</b>	7	2	2
<b>EU / EU Leaders</b>	2	5	6

*Table 8. Comparison of those featured in headlines*

Three of the headlines from *The Guardian* that mention Boris Johnson appear to directly put the blame for mishaps or negative outcomes on the Prime Minister. These include an October 20<sup>th</sup> headline reporting “Boris Johnson could be held in contempt of court over Brexit letter”, and October 26<sup>th</sup>’s “Johnson’s Halloween nightmare: how PM’s Brexit tactics fell apart”.

*The Guardian* features two headlines which reference other MPs and political parties, namely Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour party, both of whom feature in negative headlines. The two articles detail a similar conflict with Johnson, with an October 23<sup>rd</sup> headline reading “Election rumours intensify after Johnson and Corbyn Brexit stalemate”, while an October 27<sup>th</sup> headline reads “Labour will only agree to election if Johnson forbids no-deal Brexit”.

There were also five mentions of the EU in *The Guardian*'s headlines, two of which specifically reference the nations of France and Germany. Positive mentions of the EU narrowly outweigh the negative three-two.

### **The Times Headlines**

Fifteen articles from *The Times* during the given time period feature eleven negative, two positive, and two neutral headlines. There are six mentions of Boris Johnson, with four featuring in the negative headlines, one in a positive, and one in a neutral. The mentions seen here seem to lay somewhere between those of the other two newspapers given that *The Telegraph* featured seven headlines sympathetic to Johnson and *The Guardian* featured three implying blame on the Prime Minister. *The Times*' headlines seem to show bias neither for or against Johnson with his name appearing in fewer headlines and with less descriptive language alluding to a certain opinion of him. Only one headline seems to imply that Johnson is at fault, with October 26<sup>th</sup>'s reading "We'll still be here in 2192...humour and despair amid Boris Johnson's Brexit morass".

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Times Headlines</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Three years on, Brexit poll puts Leave ahead by 8 points
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Sterling sent spinning by Brexit turbulence
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit war of words dominates parliament
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU poised to grant three-month Brexit extension
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson wants to pass Brexit deal in a week but EU is poised for delay
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	No-deal Brexit will never be EU's decision, says Donald Tusk
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Brexit delay 'in the hands of the EU', says Boris Johnson

<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson poised for election call as Eu wrangles over Brexit extension
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	No decision on Brexit extension as Westminster divided on election
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	We'll still be here in 2192 . . . humour and despair amid Boris Johnson's Brexit morass
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Rule out no-deal Brexit if you want election, Labour's Diane Abbott tells Boris Johnson
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit leaves extra MEPs 'in limbo'
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit delay and Fed jitters hit London stocks
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit casts cloud on dreams of a sunny retirement
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn lay out plans for Brexit

*Table 9. The Times Headlines*

There are two mentions of other MPs seen here. Labour's Diane Abbott appears in a neutral headline from October 27<sup>th</sup> calling for Johnson to "rule out a no-deal Brexit" if he wants an election. Jeremy Corbyn meanwhile features in a positive headline on October 31<sup>st</sup> with the deadline extended and further plans being made.

The most frequent mentions of the EU and its leaders appear in *The Times*, with six mentions to either the EU itself, MEPs, or Donald Tusk. It is also the only publication to mention Donald Tusk, or any other European leader by name.

*The Times'* headlines are the shortest on average, with 10.2 words per headline. *The Guardian* follows closely with 10.4 and *The Telegraph* leads with a significantly higher 13.9 words per headline. This may partly explain the difference in the number of mentions of Boris Johnson or other named players and parties, so as to accommodate the respective house styles of keeping the headlines long or short.

## **Headline Conclusions**

*The Telegraph* quite clearly appears to have more of an affiliation to Boris Johnson than either of the other two newspapers. He features most frequently in this publication and there is a greater attempt of understanding and sympathy shown to him and his actions. *The Guardian* appears most against Johnson given its mentions of him appear exclusively in the negative headlines, of which three attribute blame to him for the events in question. *The Times* seems to lie somewhere between the other two newspapers in their attitude towards Johnson. It features Johnson's name less frequently than the others, though four of the six mentions appear in negative headlines with one attributing responsibility for a "Brexit morass" to him.

*The Telegraph* also contains the most frequent mentions of other MPs and political parties operating in Westminster. This seems to suggest a more domestic focus to their news reporting. *The Guardian* and *The Times* both feature fewer mentions of British politicians and considerably more of the EU and personnel in Brussels. The latter publications appear to be more Eurocentric in their reporting. This is clear from their respective mentions of Boris Johnson and other MPs in comparison to that of the EU and its leaders, and the category of headlines in which they are found. *The Guardian*'s five mentions of the EU appear more in their positive headlines than that of *The Telegraph*'s two, which appear in the negative and neutral categories.

## **Language Analysis**

Aside from the way an article is framed and how the headline introduces the story, examining the way in which people are described is a good way of understanding a



publication's attitude to a certain person, group, or establishment. Due to the fact that this study only includes a sample of the articles covering Brexit that were published during this period, it is not possible to definitively say the attitude that a publication has to any of the people or establishments discussed. It is certainly an indication of their general opinion; however, this may also differ from journalist to journalist within the one publication.

The types of verbs and adjectives used to describe the people and parties involved was not as varied as one might expect to find in tabloid news. One would typically find more expressive and direct words employed in such publications. In broadsheet journalism it is more likely that the basic facts are reported and explained, and with the language more neutral; the tone is not as palpable, but the point still gets across.

There were frequent mentions of EU leaders and other heads of state, but generally with neutral language and rarely even any form of descriptive language. There was occasionally a critique of their actions that imply an opinion, but more frequently a concise report of events with little direct discussion of the people involved and their actions.

### **The Telegraph**

The most positive mentions of Boris Johnson were seen in the articles published in *The Telegraph*. In an October 24<sup>th</sup> piece, it was reported that Johnson had “healed divisions” in his cabinet over whether to hold an election or give MPs more time to agree his deal (Rayner, Yorke and Diver, 2019).

Interestingly, with the negative mentions of Johnson, they almost all related to him having lost favour with others, rather than any reporting of specific wrongdoing on his part. They are almost always as a result of other people have done or said something and not Johnson himself. For example, when the DUP announced that he had “lost their respect”

after amending the bill in order to include a customs border in the Irish Sea, effectively separating Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK (Rothwell and Mikhailova, 2019).

Likewise, a mention of Johnson “pulling out from a grilling by Sarah Wollaston’s Liaison Committee” implies that while he appears to have avoided a committee appearance, the word “grilling” seems to imply that he was going to be scrutinised by the committee (Bennett, 2019).

Conservatives as a party were mentioned both favourably and unfavourably in *The Telegraph*. An October 25<sup>th</sup> article noting they had a “healthy majority” which should allow them to push through the legislation (Bennett, 2019). Conversely, Geoffrey Cox is described as “booming” that it was a “dead parliament” and he reportedly “insisted he would ‘certainly not’ apologise for his remarks, adding that he stood by ‘every one’ of them” (Bennett, 2019).

The DUP are never mentioned positively, only with neutral or negative language. The issue of having to create a border either in the Irish Sea, between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK, or between NI and the Republic of Ireland, was one with which the DUP was never going to be satisfied. They do not want NI to be separated from the rest of the UK, or to have a hard border with the Rep. of Ireland. It is therefore expected that the DUP would be the main opponents to Johnson’s deal, and that would be mentioned most often negatively. The DUP are mentioned in this such manner as they are the party on the defensive and “refused to back the agreement” which included customs checks on the border between NI and the Rep. of Ireland, claiming it “drives a coach and horses through the Good Friday Agreement” (Wilson, Kirk and Scott, 2019). Similarly, Arlene Foster is described as having “ordered Boris Johnson to return to Brussels to renegotiate his Brexit deal”, and having opened her speech at the DUP annual conference with “a barb aimed at the PM that drew

laughs from the audience” (Rothwell, 2019). The latter quote again includes a negative portrayal of Johnson at someone else’s doing.

Jeremy Corbyn received several negative mentions in *The Telegraph*, including a call from Johnson “to ‘summon up the nerve’ to let voters decide who should lead the country”, followed by a claim that Corbyn was “fudging his response” saying he would back an election as soon as a no-deal Brexit was “off the table” (Rayner, Yorke and Diver, 2019).

While the quote to “summon up the nerve” is not a direct line from the newspapers, but rather Johnson, it is still included in the report and encouraging a portrayal of Corbyn to the reader as currently having no nerve. Similarly, Corbyn is attributed blame for the delay to Brexit with a quote from Nigel Farage claiming that he is “causing more dither and delay” (Rayner, Rothwell and Bennett, 2019).

Corbyn’s Labour party are described as being “left in disarray”, and - along with the Liberal Democrats - as “offering another year of uncertainty by insisting on a second referendum” (Rayner, Yorke and Diver, 2019). The Liberal Democrats’ leader Jo Swinson is described as having “declared [that] she relished the prospect of a December general election as she insisted it was the best way of forcing an EU extension to Brexit until at least January 31<sup>st</sup>” (Hymas, 2019). The verbs used to describe Swinson here are all quite aggressive, or seem to imply that she is aggressive. Whether or not that was the intention of the journalist is unknown, but nevertheless that is how it comes across to the reader.

The “Remainers” in general are held responsible for the UK failing to meet the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline, with one article claiming that they have done “little except force [Johnson] to delay” in terms of helping to deliver a referendum result (Bennett, 2019). Words like “plotting”, “thwart”, and “scupper” are also used when discussing their attempts

to block approval of Johnson's deal (Mikhailova, Yorke and Rothwell, 2019 & Bennett, 2019).

List of all positive and negative mentions of politicians and political parties in *The Telegraph*:

<b><u>People / Parties</u></b>	<b><u>Date - Quote</u></b>
<b>Boris Johnson</b>	
<i>Positive</i>	24/10 - "Healed divisions in his cabinet" 24/10 - "Mr Johnson received a boost (...) his second victory of the week" 26/10 - "Received a hero's welcome"
<i>Negative</i>	22/10 - Lost respect of DUP 23/10 - Defeated over his withdrawal timetable 25/10 - Avoided a "grilling" by committee 27/10 - "Neither one of them [Johnson or Corbyn] is fit to lead our country"
<b>Conservatives</b>	
<i>Positive</i>	25/10 - "A healthy conservative majority" 25/10 - Sajid Javid described as "typically mild-mannered"
<i>Negative</i>	21/10 - Letwin's amendment forced Johnson to comply with Article 50 extension 25/10 - Geoffrey Cox "boomed" about "dead parliament" and "insisted he would 'certainly not' apologise for his remarks, adding that he stood by 'every one' of them"
<b>Nigel Farage</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	19/10 - Accused of talking "complete rubbish" by radio host
<b>DUP</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	22/10 - "Sceptical" 26/10 - "Feels betrayed by Johnson whose deal puts up trade barriers between NI and UK" 26/10 - Nigel Dodds "launched a thinly concealed attack on Mr Johnson" in his speech 26/10 - "DUP is resisting Mr Johnson's deal" 29/10 - "The DUP has so far refused to back the agreement"
<b>Arlene Foster</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	26/10 - "Arlene Foster has ordered Boris Johnson to return to Brussels and renegotiate his Brexit deal" 26/10 - Opened her speech with "a barb aimed at the PM that drew laughs from the audience"
<b>Jeremy Corbyn</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	24/10 - Johnson says to "summon up the nerve" 24/10 - "fudging up his response" 25/10 - Accused of engineering stand off waiting for EU leaders to grant extension

	25/10 - “His resistance to an election is ironically helping keep no-deal alive” 30/10 – “Tomorrow [Johnson] will blame Mr Corbyn for causing ‘more dither and delay’”
<b>Labour</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	24/10 - “Left in disarray” 24/10 - Labour and Lib Dems “offering another year of uncertainty by insisting on second referendum” 25/10 – “Labour is planning to deny Mr Johnson’s motion the necessary support he needs for an election to be held” 28/10 – “Labour’s position descended into farce after it emerged Mr Corbyn could tell his MPs to back an election just 24 hours after telling them not to”
<b>Jo Swinson &amp; Liberal Democrats</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	24/10 - Labour and Lib Dems “offering another year of uncertainty by insisting on second referendum” 27/10 – “Jo Swinson declared (...) she relished the prospect of a December general election as she insisted it was the best way of forcing an EU extension” 27/10 – “She challenged Labour to back her proposed bill for an election on December 9 <sup>th</sup> ”
<b>Remainer Campaign</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	20/10 – “Plotting” 20/10 – “Tory ‘rebels’” 20/10 – “MPs will continue to thwart attempts to approve a deal” 21/10 – Fears they could “scupper” Johnson’s deal 25/10 – Have done to “little except force him [Johnson] to delay” in terms of helping to deliver the referendum result 31/10 – “Remainers are the ones celebrating, having delayed our exit yet again”

**Table 10.** List of all positive and negative mentions in *The Telegraph*

## **The Guardian**

Mentions of Boris Johnson in *The Guardian* were negative the majority of the time. The article reporting the march that was held outside Westminster calling for a second referendum included mention of a float being pulled by one group of protestors which carried “a figure of senior Downing Street aide Dominic Cummings – with ‘Demonic Cummings’ daubed across its forehead – using the prime minister as a puppet” (Townsend, 2019). The

intention of the protestors is clear, but while the journalist did not explicitly express their opinion, the inclusion of the float in the article seems to suggest that they agreed with its sentiment and passed it onto their readers.

Another article included an incident during Prime Minister's Questions when Corbyn questioned Johnson on the details of the withdrawal agreement bill, such as "the continued inclusion of Northern Ireland in elements of the EU's customs union" (Stewart and Walker, 2019). Johnson is reported to have incorrectly said that there would be "no checks between Northern Ireland and GB [Great Britain]", to which Corbyn responded by accusing him of "having not properly read his own bill" (Stewart and Walker, 2019).

In stark contrast to Johnson, Corbyn has only one negative mention in the form of a quote from Nicola Sturgeon accusing him of "presiding over an atmosphere within Labour where his MPs believe that if they defy the three-line whip and back the PM, they will not face any consequences" (Stewart and Elliott, 2019). Not the most scathing review of his leadership, but inclusion in the article may lead some readers to question his ability to lead his party, and with the December general election looming as it was, perhaps his ability to lead the country.

The arguments in Brussels over the length of the extension got some coverage in *The Guardian*, with Emmanuel Macron and his government taking the blame for delaying agreement on the matter. One senior diplomat is quoted, "It is the French, always the French", with another claiming that they "never back down" (Boffey, 2019).

List of all positive and negative mentions of politicians and political parties in *The Guardian*:

<b><u>People / Parties</u></b>	<b><u>Date - Quote</u></b>
<b>Boris Johnson</b>	
<i>Positive</i>	18/10 – “Johnson has promised to maintain high standards of workers’ rights in the withdrawal agreement”
<i>Negative</i>	<p>17/10 - John McDonnell (shadow chancellor) dubbed Johnson’s deal “a sell-out”</p> <p>18/10 – “Johnson’s plans were rocked on Friday by a cross-party group led by Oliver Letwin and Hilary Benn”</p> <p>18/10 – “Johnson and his team launched a charm offensive, aimed at tempting potential waverers from across the political spectrum to support his agreement”</p> <p>19/10 - “One group pulled a float carrying a figure of senior Downing Street aide Dominic Cummings – with “Demonic Cummings” daubed across its forehead – using the prime minister as a puppet”</p> <p>20/10 – “Could be held in contempt by a Scottish court after he urged EU leaders to ignore a letter asking for an extension to the Brexit deadline”</p> <p>22/10 - “The EU is set to accept the Boris Johnson’s reluctant request for a Brexit delay”</p> <p>23/10 – “Corbyn accused him [Johnson] of having not properly read his own bill” after he mistakenly claimed it would not contain a customs checks between NI and GB.</p> <p>25/10 - “A majority of member states want to accept the terms of an extension reluctantly requested by Johnson”</p> <p>27/10 - “Jeremy Corbyn said a three-month Brexit pause would not be enough to trust the prime minister” to not leave the EU with no deal</p> <p>28/10 - “Johnson, who said he would rather die in a ditch than delay Brexit, was under an obligation to agree to the terms, breaking his pledge to leave on 31 October, “no ifs, no buts ... do or die”</p> <p>28/10 - “He later sent a letter insisting that the delay was ‘unwanted’ but confirmed ‘the UK’s formal agreement to this extension’”</p> <p>30/10 - “Corbyn [urged voters] to kick out Johnson’s Conservatives who think they are ‘born to rule’”</p>
<b>Conservatives</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	<p>17/10 - “Some of the so-called “Spartans” on the right wing of the Conservative party appeared ready to abandon the DUP and support Johnson’s deal”</p> <p>18/10 – Those who voted against Johnson bill described as “rebel conservatives”</p>
<b>Jeremy Corbyn</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	18/10 - “Sturgeon accused Jeremy Corbyn of presiding over an atmosphere within Labour where his MPs believe that if they defy the three-line whip and back the PM, they will not face any consequences such as being ejected from the parliamentary party”

<b>Emmanuel Macron</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	25/10 – “Senior diplomat quoted saying that agreement in Brussels on the terms of the extension are delayed because ‘It is the French, always the French’, and “they never back down”

**Table 11.** *List of positive and negative mentions in The Guardian*

## **The Times**

There were only neutral or negative mentions of Johnson in *The Times* also. An article from October 26<sup>th</sup> claimed that Johnson was putting out “strident and occasionally ragged messaging”, while his “supposedly statesmanlike announcement was accompanied by sabre-rattling in private meetings” (Wright, Swinford and Elliott, 2019). Mocking of Johnson’s failure to meet the deadline of October 31<sup>st</sup> was also included in the form of a joke tweeted by former Bulgarian environment minister Julian Popov, reading “The year is 2192. The British prime minister visits Brussels to ask for an extension of the Brexit deadline. No one remembers where this tradition originated, but every year it attracts tourists from all over the world” (Wright, Swinford and Elliott, 2019). In the same article, Johnson is reported to have been given “a second bloody nose” by parliament after they voted against the government’s timetable to get the legislation through the Commons before the deadline.

*The Times* seems to be the only publication to feature criticism of EU personnel such as Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker. In an article published on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, Tusk is reported to be “creating extra problems in the Commons for Mr Johnson” by describing the new deal as bearing resemblance to Theresa May’s agreement (Waterfield, 2019). The words “creating” and “extra” seem to suggest they are unnecessary, and that Tusk is being difficult.

Likewise, Juncker is said to have “complained that Brexit had dominated his time in the EU’s top job and was a ‘waste of time and waste of energy’” (Waterfield, 2019). Brexit



is a major and complex issue which clearly demands a huge amount of time and effort from all involved in the negotiations. The inclusion of this quote from Juncker may be a simple report of what was said, or it could be a hint to the reader that all involved spent so much “time and energy” on it, and by ‘complaining’ he is perhaps attempting to suggest otherwise.

List of all positive and negative mentions of politicians and political parties in *The Times*:

People / Parties	Negative
<b>Boris Johnson</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	<p>19/10 - “Despite Boris Johnson and his bus, there was no correlation between the two” [Google search for ‘Brexit’ topped those for ‘NHS’ for “a handful of weeks” between 2016-2019]</p> <p>21/10 – “Boris Johnson believes that he ‘has the numbers’ to ram his deal through the Commons by the end of the week”</p> <p>26/10 – “MPs sabotaged Boris Johnson’s attempt to put his Brexit deal to a meaningful vote”</p> <p>26/10 - “The year is 2192 (...) the prime minister visits Brussels to ask for an extension of the Brexit deadline. No one remembers where this tradition originated, but every year it attracts many tourists from all over the world</p> <p>26/10 - “When Mr Johnson was given a second bloody nose by parliament [voting against the government’s timetable to get the legislation through the Commons before the deadline]”</p> <p>26/10 - “The strident and occasionally ragged messaging from Downing Street”</p> <p>26/10 - “Mr Johnson’s supposedly statesmanlike announcement was accompanied by sabre-rattling in private briefings”</p> <p>26/10 - “Aides claimed that if Labour refused [an election], the prime minister would in effect go on strike, refusing to lay all but the most vital legislation”</p> <p>26/10 - “Mr Johnson is a man whose own destiny on Brexit is not within his control”</p>
<b>Nigel Farage</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	<p>25/10 - “There are fears among Conservatives that if there is an election before [Brexit], it will play into the hands of Nigel Farage’s Brexit Party”</p>
<b>Donald Tusk</b>	
<i>Negative</i>	<p>22/10 - “Creating extra problems in the Commons for Mr Johnson, Mr Tusk described the new deal as essentially the same as Theresa May’s old agreement”</p>
<b>Jean-Claude Juncker</b>	

<i>Negative</i>	22/10 - “[Juncker] complained that Brexit had dominated his time in the EU’s top job and was a ‘waste of time and waste of energy’”
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**Table 12.** List of all positive and negative mentions in *The Times*

## **Language Conclusions**

*The Telegraph* feature the highest number of positive mentions of Boris Johnson. As mentioned above, the negative mentions almost always come as the result of others, and he personally is never described using negative language. This is in contrast to the mentions of opposition MPs such as Jeremy Corbyn or Jo Swinson who are described using harsher verbs and adjectives.

*The Guardian* clearly disapprove of Johnson’s actions in relation to the two letters he sent to the EU asking for an extension, but admitting that he did not personally want one (Stewart and Walker, 2019). Multiple references are seen in *The Guardian* to his “reluctant request” for an extension (Boffey, 2019).

There are no positive mentions of Johnson in *The Times*, though they are perhaps lighter in their criticism by presenting it in a humorous manner. Examples include the joke about the extension still being renewed far into the future, and poking fun at Johnson for Google searches of “Brexit” and the “NHS” having no correlation despite him “and his bus” (Calver, 2019).

From the information seen in the tables above, *The Times* could be said to be the least critical of the individuals involved. Their headlines and articles are both the shortest of the three newspapers. This could be due to the fact that they simply report more efficiently and perhaps forego the inclusion of descriptive language and report the news as it happened, without critique. *The Times* are, however, the only publication who include critical language to describe the actions of the EU personnel. This could indicate a negative attitude to the EU

leaders, or could be explained by the fact that they include more references in total to the EU leaders than the other two publications, and so more negative mentions is not as significant a discovery.

*The Telegraph* made not definitively positive or negative mentions of EU leaders such as Emmanuel Macron and Donald Tusk. Though they also had fewer mentions of them overall, perhaps suggestive of some kind of apathy towards them, or simply a preference for domestic developments.

## Chapter V – Conclusions

This research project posed four questions based on the theories of news reporting and the research previously carried out on Brexit news coverage. After analysing the coverage and assessing the results, these questions can finally be answered.

The first question related to the news values featuring in the events reported in each of the newspapers. The trend across the three newspapers was generally seen to include a similar number of occurrences of each value. This was particularly the case with the more frequent values of unambiguity and continuity, and the less frequent values of personification and composition. As expected, the latter values were noted less often due to the fact that news reports in broadsheet publications like those included in this study do not include such features.

It is no surprise then that so many of the articles presented by the three newspapers over the course of this two-week period contain so many negative headlines. Considering the likelihood for negative news to be more often and widely report, it is fitting that each newspaper features more negative than positive events, or certainly presents them in that way. The UK's failure to meet the October 31<sup>st</sup> deadline was always destined to be reported in a negative manner, along with those responsible for the failure.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the reason for continuity featuring so often is perhaps due to Brexit being executed over such a long period. Rather than being reported as one event, it is seen in the news practically every time a minor progression, or regression, occurs. Similarly, with unambiguity, the complex nature of Brexit and its negotiations demand clear and concise reporting in order for the reader to comprehend proceedings, which is a feature of all the newspapers contained in the sample. Almost all of the articles contain

mentions of politicians in Westminster and Brussels, as is necessary when reporting on Brexit, leading to the news value of reference to elite people featuring so frequently.

Interestingly, one of the news values which was not found a similar number of times was that of unexpectedness. This was found significantly more times in *The Guardian*, potentially suggesting a desire to portray the government as not being in control of the events unfolding. This feeds into the publications apparent anti-Johnson and pro-EU stance that is also witnessed elsewhere in the study.

These results show that in regard to news values, the British media's reporting on Brexit generally was in line with trends across other publications and political topics, featuring the expected number of each value associated with this type of coverage.

The framing analysis shows that conflict was overwhelmingly the most common frame seen in the total sample. There were twenty-five instances of conflict being the dominant frame, ahead of responsibility with thirteen, economic consequence with five, only one for human-interest, and one article in *The Times* was deemed to have none of the above as the dominant frame.

*The Guardian* has more conflict framed articles than either of the other two. This possibly reinforces their position of being the most pro-EU by portraying a more equal contest between those in Brussels and at home. *The Telegraph* have more responsibility framed article and tend to fall on the side of Johnson, while *The Times* are situated somewhere in between, giving responsibility to Johnson and his opponents in relatively equal measure. *The Times* also features more coverage with the economic consequence frame, with three articles in the time period with this frame, the most of the three newspapers. They appear more concerned with the stocks and the effect of Brexit on retirement plans than their fellow publications.

When it comes to how the players involved in Brexit are described, there is a noticeable difference in the language used from one person to the next, and in one publication to the next. *The Telegraph* feature the highest number of positive mentions of Boris Johnson and the lowest number of negative, with the majority of occurrence as a result of other's words and actions. This is in stark contrast to his rival parties' leaders Jeremy Corbyn and Jo Swinson who are described using much more unpleasant and harsher language. *The Telegraph* feature many more negative mentions Corbyn, and are the only publication to feature negative comments about Labour, Jo Swinson, the Liberal Democrats and the Remain campaign. Their position on Brexit, and those who they portray as the cause of the delay, is quite clear.

*The Guardian*, on the other hand, clearly disapprove of Johnson and his "reluctant request" for an extension. The greatest number of negative descriptions of Johnson and his actions were found in this paper, with twelve instances, in contrast to *The Times*' nine and *The Telegraph*'s four. It only seems right to acknowledge that Boris Johnson used to write for *The Telegraph*, and so may have a tendency to sympathise with him as he duels with fellow MPs and EU leaders. The political affiliation of the newspaper has traditionally been conservative too, which only goes to reinforce their apparent position regarding Brexit.

In conclusion, there seems to be a consensus of the kinds of events surrounding Brexit that are deemed newsworthy, with several of the same kinds of events appearing in all three newspapers. The same can generally be said for the frames through which the news is presented to the reader. However, the most apparent difference between the three newspaper comes in the form of a clear difference of opinion of some of the players involved, and in attitudes to the EU.

While *The Telegraph* are generally more focused on the domestic issues and more sympathetic to Boris Johnson, *The Guardian* swing significantly in the other direction, appearing more Eurocentric and with more frequent criticism of Johnson and Brexit in general. *The Times* once again fall in somewhere in the middle, through a slightly more balance approach to criticism, but also a noticeable lack of obvious opinions to begin with.

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## Chapter VII – Appendices

Appendix 1: List of all articles from *The Telegraph*

Date	The Telegraph Headlines
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit deal latest news: Boris Johnson to give MPs 'my deal or no deal' ultimatum after EU rules out extension
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris's Brexit deal is a 'fresh start' after years of 'division and doubt' says Cabinet minister Robert Jenrick
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Nigel Farage: 'Only an election can solve Brexit impasse'
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces 'guerilla war' over new vote on Brexit deal
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	How Boris Johnson's big Brexit deal week could leave him forced by MPs to agree to a delay
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	DUP says Boris Johnson has lost their respect as they vote against Brexit deal
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Markets mixed as UK returns to Brexit limbo
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson challenges Jeremy Corbyn to 'end this nightmare' with a general election on December 12
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris needs an election to slay this zombie Parliament, which has Brexit in its deathly grip
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Arlene Foster tells Boris Johnson to renegotiate his Brexit deal again in barbed DUP conference speech
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Jo Swinson 'relishes' December election as way to force Brexit extension
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson puts Brexit deal on ice to force general election
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	No-deal Brexit odds: Latest predictions on leaving the EU without a deal
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit Party could help Tories in general election by not fighting hundreds of seats
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	The Remainder plot to turn October 31 into Brexit's funeral day has backfired

Appendix 2: List of articles from *The Guardian*

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Guardian Headlines <i>Strap</i></b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson plays numbers game after securing Brexit deal  <i>PM insists he is ‘very confident’ his deal will be approved by parliament on Saturday</i>
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	PM faces Brexit extension even if his deal is passed  <i>Labour and former Tory MPs join bid to force through extension with amendment on ‘super Saturday’</i>
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	March organisers hail ‘one of the greatest protest marches in British history’  <i>Led by mayor Sadiq Khan, around one million protestors gathered to demand a fresh referendum</i>
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson could be held in contempt of court over Brexit letter  <i>Prime minister broke promise not to frustrate Benn act, Scotland’s most senior judge will hear</i>
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	EU would agree to Brexit delay, says German minister  <i>Merkel ally Peter Altmaier says ‘it goes without saying’ Brexit extension would be granted</i>
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	EU signals it is likely to give UK a Brexit delay up to 31 January  <i>Donald Tusk says ‘we should treat the British request for an extension in all seriousness’</i>
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Election rumours intensify after Johnson and Corbyn Brexit stalemate  <i>PM and Labour leader meet but do not agree timetable for withdrawal agreement bill</i>
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU set to put Brexit delay on hold after Johnson's ultimatum  <i>PM’s threat to pull deal if Corbyn rejects general election leaves Brussels in state of flux</i>



<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>EU delays Brexit extension decision as France piles pressure on MPs</p> <p><i>Macron's apparent support of No 10 strategy means decision won't be made until days before UK due to leave</i></p>
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>Johnson's Halloween nightmare: how PM's Brexit tactics fell apart</p> <p><i>The prime minister and the Labour leader face huge problems as their strategies collapsed and they were forced to backtrack</i></p>
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>Labour will only agree to election if Johnson forbids no-deal Brexit</p> <p><i>Leader Jeremy Corbyn insists threat of leaving UK without deal has to be removed for good</i></p>
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>EU begins planning for trade negotiations after UK agrees to Brexit extension</p> <p><i>Renewed confidence in Brussels that UK moving towards resolution of first Brexit phase</i></p>
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>No-deal Brexit means return of battery eggs, farmers' union warns</p> <p><i>NFU says government has ignored calls for tariffs on cheap UK imports from caged hens</i></p>
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	<p>Brexit: Parliament breaks deadlock with vote for 12 December election</p> <p><i>Boris Johnson wins vote to secure snap poll at fourth time of asking</i></p>
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	<p>"Brexit uncertainty" halts anti-trafficking work in Glasgow</p> <p><i>Collaboration between airport and Romanian police paused in February, says Border Force</i></p>

Appendix 3: List of all articles from The Times

<b>Date</b>	<b>The Times Headlines</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Three years on, Brexit poll puts Leave ahead by 8 points
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Sterling sent spinning by Brexit turbulence
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit war of words dominates parliament
<b>Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> October</b>	EU poised to grant three-month Brexit extension
<b>Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson wants to pass Brexit deal in a week but EU is poised for delay
<b>Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b>	No-deal Brexit will never be EU's decision, says Donald Tusk
<b>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	Brexit delay 'in the hands of the EU', says Boris Johnson
<b>Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson poised for election call as Eu wrangles over Brexit extension
<b>Friday 25<sup>th</sup> October</b>	No decision on Brexit extension as Westminster divided on election
<b>Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b>	We'll still be here in 2192 . . . humour and despair amid Boris Johnson's Brexit morass
<b>Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Rule out no-deal Brexit if you want election, Labour's Diane Abbott tells Boris Johnson
<b>Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit leaves extra MEPs 'in limbo'
<b>Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit delay and Fed jitters hit London stocks
<b>Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> October</b>	Brexit casts cloud on dreams of a sunny retirement
<b>Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October</b>	Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn lay out plans for Brexit